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Letter to the
Hon. John C. Calhoun
on the annexation of Texas.
1844.



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LETTER

TO THE

HON. JOHN C. CALHOUN,

ON THE

ANNEXATION OF TEXAS.

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TO JOHN C. CALHOUN,
SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,

The questions whether the government of the United States constitutionally possess the power, and if so, whether it is expedient for this nation to connect itself with the nation of Texas, and thus form one nation out of two, involve considerations of such vital importance and deep and momentous interest to every citizen of this country, as will, I hope, excuse one of those citizens for submitting to you, and through you to the public, the result of his reflections on the subject. I have ventured to address you publicly through the press, without previously obtaining your consent, because you, as the organ of the government, negotiated the treaty of union between Texas and the United States; and because I have for many years known you as a statesman of eminence, and for more than a quarter of a century have had the honor of a personal acquaintance with you—an acquaintance which, it gives me pleasure to say, has inspired me with great admiration for your talents, and an unwavering confidence in your integrity and patriotism;—and I am quite sure that while you claim and exercise the right of declaring and acting in coincidence with your own opinions, you freely and cheerfully accord the same right to others. I shall therefore, with the most perfect freedom, submit my views to you, although I am fully aware that those views are entirely adverse to the opinions you have formed and expressed on the questions I am about to consider.

Without an alteration of the constitution of the United States, and without a stipulation for the abolition of slavery in Texas, I am opposed to its annexation to this nation, either at the present or at any future period.

My relations to the two great parties into which the people of this Union are divided, can be of little, perhaps no im-

portance, except that it may be supposed that my opinions on the question of annexation may have been more or less influenced by my party predilections. On this account I hope I may be excused for so far defining my position as to say, that though for several years past, strictly speaking, I have ceased to be a partizan, I have voted with the democratic party of the state of New York ; that at the late election I voted for the state officers who had been selected as candidates by that party, but that I did not vote for electors of president of the United States. I could not vote for Mr. Polk, (although thousands, and I verily believe hundreds of thousands who hold opinions similar to mine on the subject of annexation, did vote for him) because he had declared himself in favor of immediate annexation. I could not vote for Mr. Clay, for although I entertain a high personal regard for his talents and patriotism, I entirely disapprove, among other things, of his scheme for conducting the fiscal concerns of the nation, believing as I do that the much abused sub-treasury plan recommended by Mr. Van Buren, and ably and zealously supported by yourself, will be found the best if not the only safe and successful mode of collecting and disbursing the national funds ; and, I entirely disapproved of Mr. Clay's letter dated the first day of last July, and another letter written by him afterwards on the subject of the annexation of Texas, as inconsistent with the views put forth by him in his letter from North Carolina on the same subject, and with the high and honorable bearing which has generally distinguished that eminent statesman.

I knew too little of Mr. Birney's general political views to feel justified in voting for him ; and besides I have always considered the abolitionists as standing on a platform too narrow for a national political party. Although I am aware, and it gives me pleasure to acknowledge, that that party contains among its members some of the most talented and benevolent men in the nation, it is nevertheless, I fear true, that they have constructed a Procrustean bed to the dimensions of which every individual belonging to it is compelled to conform—a bed on which the venerable John Quincy Adams, Slade and Giddings, have been tortured and mangled with unrelenting severity.

In all controversies, whether in politics or ethics, an adroit antagonist, if hard pressed for facts and reasons to support his positions, will seek for words and phrases which may seem at the outset to give him an advantage. Hence the advocates of the treaty of a union between Texas and the

United States have given this union the name of the "*re-annexation*" of Texas—as if *names* could alter the nature and quality of *things*, thereby assuming as an admitted fact, that the Texian territory was at some previous period a part of the United States.

That the United States in their diplomatic communications with Spain claimed a part of the territory which now constitutes Texas, is undeniable ; and it is equally undeniable that that claim was most promptly resisted and denied by the Spanish, as it has since been by the Mexican and Texian governments. I shall not attempt to examine into the nature or merits of this controversy.* It is sufficient for my purpose to state the fact, that after the most ample discussion, the claim was voluntarily abandoned by the United States, our true south-western bounds were agreed on, and the line run and marked by our own agents, in accordance with the stipulations of a treaty duly and constitutionally ratified by the two governments interested in the question. Since that time the United States, in acknowledging Texas as an independent nation, has recognized this boundary, and again publicly and solemnly admitted that that country formed no part of the United States. Why, then, talk of the *re-annexation* of Texas ? As well, and with more propriety, might Great Britain talk of *re-annexing* Calais, in France, or the territory which comprised the old thirteen United States, to that Empire. This, I say, the British might with more propriety do, because they long held possession of Calais and the United States, but this government never had peaceable possession of a rood of land in Texas. If any reliance is to be placed on the admissions and acquiescence of parties, if treaties be not the merest phantoms, and if the pledged faith of nations be not a trick to be used only to lure and defraud, then to talk of the *re-annexation* of Texas is an absurdity which might be anticipated as one of the pitiful devices of a pettifogger, but which is utterly unworthy of a man claiming to sustain the character of a statesman.

I am aware that many good and worthy citizens desire

* A full history of this controversy is given in a very able and well written pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on the proposed annexation of Texas," published last April, and said to have been written by THEODORE SEDGWICK, of New York, a gentleman whose name alone is sufficient to command respect and attention to any thing said or written by him. His account of the matter referred to in the text, will be found from p. 8 to 14 of his pamphlet.

to acquire Texas, because they believe that an extension of territory will be beneficial to the United States. But as my objections to annexation are based upon other reasons--reasons which have no relation to the question whether it is or is not good policy for this government to increase its territory, I do not propose to discuss in the abstract that question; but in passing, it may be proper to remark, that while on the one hand the idea of embracing in one grand federal republic the whole, or nearly the whole, of the North American continent, united under our liberal form of government, is fascinating to the ardent imagination of the young American patriot; there are many sagacious and wise men among us who are sincere lovers of our free institutions, and regard with lively sensibility every movement which may endanger them, that believe an extension of territory by increasing the diversity of local interests, would multiply local jealousies and animosities, and thereby jeopard the permanence of the Union. To this objection is added another, which is, that we have already a thousand millions of acres of unsold lands, that the acquisition of Texas would induce many citizens and emigrants to purchase lands there, instead of purchasing in states and territories where we now hold lands; that the great quantity of lands which the annexation of Texas would force into the market would lessen the price of lands already in good faith purchased of the government and paid for by our own citizens, and that the same arguments which are urged in favor of the annexation of Texas may be urged in favor of extending our line so as to include Mexico and Central America; that every individual government must from the nature of things, if not from the nature of the government itself, have its limits, otherwise by its own weight it will crumble to pieces; and that upon the principles on which the acquisition of Texas are urged there can be no limits to the extension of our territory.

"Ask where's the north? at York 'tis on the Tweed---

In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there

At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where."

Again, the advocates of annexation, after assuming what has not been proved and what has been denied of record by the British government, affirm that unless Texas is made a part of the United States it will become a colony of Great Britain, or at any rate a dependant on her. It has also been urged, that smuggling would be encouraged, and Tariff laws would be evaded, and in case of war between the United

States and England, Texas would present a feasible point from which this country would be invaded.

Many years ago Mr. Monroe announced the doctrine that no European power ought thereafter to be permitted to establish colonies in North America. That proposition received the unanimous approbation of the people of the United States. The nations of Europe are now fully aware that this is a settled principle in this country. They know that an attempt to violate this rule would be regarded by us as good cause of war. It will then be time enough, when England makes the effort to possess Texas as a colony, to resist the consummation of the measure if need be, by a war;--- and in a war thus provoked all hands and all hearts would ardently unite. Suppose England does intend colonizing Texas, would it not be wise to wait until she affords some evidence of such intention, and then at once declare war against her? Such surely would be the manly and honorable course. Or shall we, as the Texan treaty indicates, meanly avoid meeting Great Britain as open and honorable enemies, and in a dastardly manner violate our plighted faith, if treaties plight faith, with a neighboring sister republic, because she is weaker than we? I have heard that the southern citizens of this Union are a chivalrous people. Will those of them who favor annexation exhibit such a course of conduct as a demonstration of southern chivalry? But the official communications of Mr. Upshur and yourself put this matter at rest. You do not claim the annexation of Texas because you apprehend it will fall into the hands of the British, but solely because you apprehend if it is not annexed slavery will be abolished in that country. After this avowal by our own government, can there be a sane man in the United States who does not know that the story that the British intend to possess Texas as a colony is not the merest humbug which the age has produced?

That goods may be smuggled from Texas into the United States in violation of our revenue laws is extremely probable, and the prevention of such practices will depend on the standard of morals held by the citizens on the line between the two countries, and on the fidelity and vigilance of our revenue officers. But the argument deduced from the probability of smuggling, if it amounts to any thing, proves too much. It proves that we ought to have no outside lines except the shores of the ocean. The whole line of our northern frontier, highly commercial as that frontier is, is bounded on the British colonies. Is it probable that our revenue laws

will be more frequently violated between Texas and Louisiana than between Canada and New York? Besides, if Texas should be annexed to the U. S. the same, or nearly the same, facilities will exist for smuggling goods from Mexico into Texas as now does, for smuggling goods from Texas into Louisiana or Arkansas. There is nothing in this argument.

Again, we are told that unless we seize the present opportunity of annexing Texas whether that country becomes a province of England or not, yet, being as it will be, a weak power, in a future war with the British, Texas will be a point from which an invading enemy will march to subjugate the Union, and general Jackson, or some other person in the name of the retired and aged, I will not say superannuated, warrior, has represented this country as in imminent danger of invasion from that quarter. In the ardent imagination of the writer of these epistles from the Hermitage, the swamps and everglades of Arkansas and Louisiana seem to glitter with the arms and bristle with the bayonets of murderous Britons, all because Texas is not annexed to the United States.

My time has been spent in the humble pursuits of civil life, and therefore it becomes not me to speak with confidence on the best mode of waging war. I will however venture to suggest that if Texas is made a part of the Union, in case of war with Great Britain, we may be called upon to defend that territory, and that the enemy would be as likely in such an event to take up their line of march from Mexico to Texas, as in the other from Texas to Louisiana. But suppose a war with England and an attempt at invasion, can any rational man believe that such invasion would be commenced by landing an army in Texas, and marching it through the wilderness to the Mississippi river? It will not be forgotten that Great Britain is confessedly mistress of the ocean, and that our seacoast, with numerous harbors and bays, extends thousands of miles. Who then believes that the British—those same British who less than thirty years ago landed an army in the bay of Chesapeake, which marched to Washington, ravaged and burnt the president's house, destroyed the capitol and returned to their ships in safety—the same British whose fleet sailed up the Mississippi to the city of New Orleans, and there landed an army which was defeated by the gallant troops under the command of Gen. Jackson—who, I say, believes that it is fit and proper to violate treaties and draw upon us the indigna-

tion and abhorrance if not the contempt of every civilized nation on the globe, and, as I shall hereafter shew, palpably to violate our own constitution which we have sworn to support, because forsooth there is danger of an invasion by a British army *marching from Texas*? Should such visionary apprehensions be entertained, I should not be surprised if a proposition should be made to establish a garrison at Bhering's straits, with a view to resist a British army which might cross on the ice for the purpose of waging a war against the United States.

Another argument in favor of annexation is, that it will as is said tend to diminish the evil, and ultimately produce the abolition, of slavery. If this position be sound, if the objection I shall hereafter make to the constitutional power of the government to unite this nation with another could be removed, then indeed my opposition to annexation would cease to exist. But is it true that a union with Texas would produce the abolition of slavery in the United States?

From a letter written by Mr. Senator Walker to a number of citizens in Carrol county, in the state of Kentucky, I learn that Mr. Tucker (I presume of Virginia) whose work I regret I have not seen, "Has" as Mr. Walker says "*demonstrated* that within probably less than eighty years, from the density of population in all the slave holding states, hired labor would be as abundant as slave labor and all *pecuniary* motive for the continuance of slavery would then have an end." Hence I presume Mr. Tucker inferred, and very fairly inferred, that slavery in these United States would be abolished after the lapse of eighty years; for it will hardly be doubted but that when it is for the interest of the slave holder to declare his slave a freeman, he will do so, especially since by the instantaneous emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, where they constituted an immense and fearful majority over the free inhabitants, experience has proved that slavery may be abolished without in the least endangering the good order and peace of community. Now if Mr. Tucker's position be true, and that it is true even Mr. Walker admits, it is most evident that the extension of the area of slave territory will increase the duration of slavery. So self-evident is this, that I should not feel myself justified in saying another word on this branch of my subject were it not that the assertion that the annexation of Texas would expedite and favor the abolition of slavery has been gravely made and extensively circulated among the inhabitants of the non-slave-holding states, by men whose elevated political

stations are calculated to command respect for their opinions and confidence in their assertions.

Mr. Walker, a member of the United States senate from the state of Mississippi, in his letter to which I have referred, and a committee of the house of representatives of which Mr. Pratt of the state of New York was chairman, have made these assertions and upon them have founded much of their reasoning in support of the treaty of annexation. On this account I hope I may be excused for occupying a few moments of the reader's time in an examination of the facts from which their inferences are made.

Mr. Pratt, as chairman of the select committee on statistics to whom was referred the petition of Thomas Earl and others in relation to certain supposed errors in the last census, on this petition, a few days before the adjournment of congress at their last session, made a report in which he made an elaborate argument in favor of the annexation of Texas. It is not my business to enquire what were the reasons which induced the committee to discuss a subject so entirely disconnected with the one referred to them, which was simply to enquire and report whether there were or were not errors in the returns of the sixth census. In answer to this enquiry the committee with great *naivete* inform the house that "they have not the means of ascertaining whether they" [the errors] "really exist or not." After imparting to the house this important intelligence, one would naturally suppose they would have asked to be discharged from the further consideration of the petition, instead of which they proceed to enlighten the house on various subjects relating to the resources of the country, and finally conclude by recommending the annexation of Texas as the most probable means of abolishing slavery in the United States. They say (p. 25 of the report) that in 1790 the number of slaves in the United States was 697,897, and that in 1840 it was 2,487,355. They say that during the same period the increase of the whites was in proportion greater than the increase of the slaves, not only when the whole union was considered, but that a comparison between the census of 1830 with that of 1840 will shew that this was also the case with the slave states taken alone during the ten intervening years. As the committee assert this to be the fact, I must of course admit it to be true, though I have not had time to test their accuracy by an examination of the census. But were not the committee aware that the states of Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana,

Missouri and Arkansas had received from 1830 to 1840 vast accessions to their white population from the free states and from Europe? Yet for this they make no allowance. That the slave population increases by *natural population* more rapidly than the white is, as I believe, a fact which is generally admitted. The returns of the last census also prove this. To shew that it does so, I will refer to a few facts which appear from that census, in the statistics of South Carolina, a state which is perhaps as little affected by the migration of free whites into it, or importation of slaves from other states, as any other state is the Union. There were in that state in 1840 of all ages 259,085 free whites, and 327,038 slaves. There were under ten years of age 85,568 whites, and under the same age 107,169 slaves. Upon the supposition that about as many slaves under the age of ten years had within that period of time been sent out of the state as whites of the same age, which I think may fairly be assumed, this statement shews the relative number of whites and slaves born in that state since the year 1830. When, therefore, it is considered that during the ten years referred to, no slaves were imported into the state of South Carolina, and that within that period a considerable number of white persons from Europe and from the free states of the Union must have domiciled themselves in that state, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the increase of the slaves by natural population must, in proportion to their relative numbers, have been greater than that of the whites. The number of whites from 20 years old to 60 is given, and it amounts to 101,539; but the number of slaves within those particular ages is not given. An accurate comparison of increase cannot therefore be made from that data, but the number of slaves from 24 to 55 years of age is given, and amounts to 108,116. From these facts it seems evident that the increase of slaves by natural population is greater than that of the whites, for while within the last ten years but 85,568 free white children had been born who in 1840 were living, there were living of slaves which had been born during the same period 107,169. And yet Mr. Pratt asserts that the increase of the whites is more rapid than that of the blacks. The committee do not even advert to these important facts and considerations, but as if they had proved the fact which they assume, proceed to draw the following inference from it.

"It follows *therefore*," say they "as effect follows cause, that the time will arrive when slavery will altogether cease

by being gradually swallowed up in the preponderating white population." Now as in South Carolina the annual increase of the whites is 8557, and the annual increase of the slaves is 10717; will the Honorable Mr. Pratt of Prattsville, chairman of the Statistical Committee in Congress inform us how long it will be before the slave population in that region "will be swallowed up by the *preponderating* white population!" "These views of the case," say the committee, "particularly the FACT that the addition of Louisiana and Florida *has not had a tendency to increase slavery*, but that the result so far has been directly the reverse, appear to have a very close connection with the (at present) much debated subject, the ANNEXATION OF TEXAS TO THE UNITED STATES."

Is it true that the addition of Louisiana and Florida to the Union has not had a tendency to increase slavery, and that the result has been directly the reverse? In Mr. Pratt's report (p. 24) he states the whole number of slaves in the U. S. in the year 1800, which was before the admission of Louisiana into the Union, to be 893,041, and that in 1840, there were 2,428,921 slaves owned by the people of the United States. From this number, however, are to be deducted 256,527 slaves in Louisiana, Missouri and Arkansas, leaving the present number of slaves in the Union as it was in 1840, at 2,230,828. I make no account of the 25,717 slaves now in Florida, as that number may be fairly offset against the slaves held in Louisiana and Florida at the respective times of their admission into the Union. It then appears that from 1800 to 1840, the slaves in the States of the Union as it was in 1800 increased from 893,041 to 2,230,828, and this without deducting from the number of slaves in 1800, some forty thousand slaves which have since been emancipated in New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It further appears that the increase of slaves in the States, exclusive of Louisiana, &c., in the last forty years, has been equal to 150 per cent; that is, where there was forty years ago 100 slaves, there are now 250; and this result Mr. Pratt thinks, proves that the extension of slave territory will annihilate slavery! His system of political Homœopathy will not, I imagine, prevail. The quackery is quite too palpable.

Does not every one know that slavery, from the redundancy of slave population, would long before this time have been abolished in Virginia and the Carolinas, had it not been for the "*safety valve*" spoken of by Mr. Walker, furnished by the market for slaves in Louisiana, Alabama and the other new states!

The committee go on to say, that "they wish to allude to this subject" [the annexation of Texas] "only so far as it is connected with slavery, and in relation to its bearing upon the statistics connected therewith. Viewing the annexation of Texas in this connection, the committee have come to the conclusion" (very logically!) "that all other objections being removed, *the question of slavery, and all matters connected with it*, will not offer any valid objection to the union; on the contrary, this union would operate favorably upon that question in all its bearings, *and your committee would regard such union as one of the means Providence has ordained for gradually freeing our country from this dangerous ingredient in its social composition.!!*"

The committee then go on to state, in the following words, chiefly taken from Mr. Walker's letter, whose reasoning they adopt, the grounds upon which they have arrived at this extraordinary conclusion. "Mr. Senator Walker's statements upon this subject (see his letter to the people of Carroll county, Kentucky) are deserving of very serious attention.

"Since the purchase of Louisiana and Florida," says Mr. Walker, "and the settlement of Alabama and Mississippi, there have been carried into this region, as the census demonstrates, from the States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky, half a million of slaves, including their descendants, that otherwise would now be within the limits of those four states." "Now, if we double the rate of diminution, as we certainly will by the reannexation of Texas, slavery will disappear from Delaware in ten years, and from Maryland in twenty, and have greatly diminished in Virginia and Kentucky." "In the District of Columbia, it would disappear in twelve years." "As slavery advances in Texas, it must recede *to the same extent* from the more northern of the slaveholding States; and, consequently, the evil to the northern States, from the expulsion into them of free blacks, by abolition, gradual or immediate, would thereby be greatly mitigated, if not entirely prevented." "This reannexation, then, would only change the *locality* of the slaves, and of the slaveholding States, *without augmenting their number.*" "As regards the slaves, the African being from a tropical climate, his comforts and condition would be greatly improved by a transfer from northern latitudes to the genial and most salubrious climate of Texas." "By the reannexation of Texas, as the number of free blacks augmented in the slave States, they would be diffused gradually through Texas into Mexico and Central and Southern America, where nine-tenths of

the present population are already of the colored races; and where, from their vast preponderance in number, they are not a degraded caste, but upon a footing, not merely of legal, but, what is far more important, of actual equality with the rest of the population." "The process (of diffusion) will be gradual and progressive, without a shock, without a convulsion; whereas, by the loss of Texas, and the imprisonment of the slave population of the Union within its present limits, *slavery would increase* in nearly all the slaveholding States, *and a change in their condition would become impossible*; or, if it did take place by sudden or gradual abolition, the result would as certainly be the sudden or gradual introduction of hundreds of thousands of free blacks into the States of the north." "There is but one way in which the north can escape this evil—and that is the reannexation of Texas, which is the only safety-valve for the whole Union, and the only practicable outlet for the African population, through Texas, into Mexico and Central and Southern America. There, is a congenial climate for the African race." "There, the boundless and almost unpeopled territory of Mexico, and Central and Southern America, with its delicious climate and most prolific soil, renders most easy the means of subsistence; and there they would not be a degraded caste, but equals among equals, not only by law, but by feeling and association."

The committee, or rather Mr. Walker, as quoted by the committee, then enquire, "Is slavery never to disappear from the Union? This," say they, "is a startling and momentous question, but the answer is easy and the proof is clear;" and the following is their answer and their *proof*!

"It will certainly disappear if Texas is reannexed to the Union, not by abolition but slowly and gradually by diffusion, as it has already thus nearly receded from several of the more northern of the slaveholding States, and as it will continue thus more rapidly to recede by the reannexation of Texas; and finally, in the distant future, without a shock, without abolition, without a convulsion, disappear into and through Texas, into Mexico, and Central and Southern America." "Beyond the Del Norte, slavery will not pass; not only because it is forbidden by law, but because the colored races there preponderate in the ratio of ten to one over the whites; and holding, as they do, the government and most of the offices in their own possession, they will never permit the enslavement of any portion of the colored race, which makes and executes the laws of the country."

"Mexico, Central America, and South America, contain together an area of 8,376,000 square miles, and a population of 24,000,000; of whom about 2,700,000 are white, and the rest Indians, Africans, mulattoes, and other colored races."

"The outlet for our negro race, through this vast region, can never be opened but by the reannexation of Texas; but, in that event, there, in that extensive country, (Mexico, Central and South America,) bordering upon our negro population, and four times greater in area than the whole Union, with a sparse population of but three to the square mile, where nine-tenths of the population is of the colored races;—there, upon that fertile soil, and in that delicious climate, so admirably adapted to the negro race, as all experience has clearly proved, the free black would find a home. There, also, as slaves, in the lapse of time, from the density of population and other causes, are emancipated, they will disappear from time to time west of the Del Norte, and beyond the limits of the Union, among a race of their own color; will be diffused throughout this vast region, where they will not be a degraded caste, and where, as to climate, and social and moral condition, and all the hopes and comforts of life, they can occupy, among equals, a position they can never attain in any part of this Union."

The committee, it will be perceived, adopting the views of Mr. Walker, contend, that if Texas is annexed to the Union the present slave states will be gradually drained of their slave population, and that as the republic of Mexico does not tolerate slavery, the whole slave population in the United States, after the anticipated annexation of Texas, will from the benevolent spirit of the slave holders, be permitted to escape to Mexico, where we are told they will instantly be transformed into useful and respectable citizens.

I shall make but two brief remarks on this extraordinary reasoning of Mr. Walker and the committee. The first is upon the allegation that they in substance make, that the demand for slaves to supply the large territory of Texas, (said to be so large that forty states of the dimensions of Massachusetts might be formed out of it,) and the other new states of the Union, will drain all the slaves from the northern slave holding states. Does past experience warrant such an anticipation? Mr. Walker himself puts forth the astounding fact, that since the purchase of Louisiana the States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky, have raised and sold out of those States *a half a million* of slaves!

and yet, has the slave population in those States diminished? It has, it is true, slightly diminished in Delaware and Maryland, but from causes other than those assigned by Mr. Walker.* In Virginia, the number of slaves in 1790, was 293,000—in 1840, there were in that State, 448,987—In the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, according to Mr. Pratt's report, there were in 1800 in both States only 53,927 slaves, and in 1840, there were in the State of Kentucky alone, as appears from the census, 181,548 slaves. Experience, then, proves most clearly the falsehood of the theory of Mr. Walker and the committee.

I submit one other consideration.—That the increased demand for an article should, in a country occupied by a sagacious people, decrease the production of it, is a new proposition in political economy. The public will, I am sure, assign to the committee, and to Mr. Walker, their distinguished pioneer, the honor of having discovered it. Will an increased demand, and the rise of the price of sheep and cattle in New England, drain the states of Ohio and New York of their sheep and cattle? Far otherwise. An increased demand for sheep and wool will increase sheep growing in those states—the price will be raised and a surplus for exportation will be produced. Does the great number of Spanish hides consumed by Mr. Pratt and other tanners in the state of New York diminish the number of cattle raised in South America? Every body knows the effect is directly the reverse. Every man knows—Mr. Walker and Mr. Pratt knew—that increased demand and consequently the increase of price for slaves which the annexation of Texas would occasion,† would increase the business of negro growing in the northern slave states, with a view to the sale of them to the Texans, always retaining in the latter states a sufficient number to perform the slave labor required to be performed there. The sale of the surplus would constitute the "*safety valve*" spoken of by Mr. Walker. This safety valve would prevent a redundancy of slave population, and in this way, and this way only, can slavery be perpetuated.

* I have not at present the statement before me, but if I recollect rightly, the diminution in both those states is about 20,000. Delaware can hardly be said to be a slave state.

† It was reported, and is generally believed, that within a few days after it was known that Mr. Tyler had concluded a treaty for the annexation of Texas, the price of slaves rose from 20 to 30 per cent.

Away then with this delusive and false pretence. A respect for the official stations of these gentlemen, restrains me from characterizing this allegation as it deserves. It is unworthy even of the appellation of sophistry. And I hope the gentlemen who favor annexation will be content with voting down their opponents, and not add to that injury a gross insult to our common sense.

The other assertion of the committee on which I propose to remark is, that in which they alledge that the annexation of Texas is necessary for the purpose of enabling the slaves to escape into Mexico.

If the object is to furnish a southern country adjoining the United States, to which slaves can flee from their masters and be free, why not permit Texas to become what if not annexed to the Union it is said (as I shall presently show by Gen. Lamar's letter to the citizens of Macon in Georgia) she will be, in case she is not annexed to the United States, to wit, a non-slaveholding State? Texas in that case would be, what Mr. Walker and his endorser, Mr. Pratt, says Mexico will be if Texas is annexed,—or if there are likely to be too many whites in Texas to suit the views of Mr. Walker, I assure him that the slaves running from their masters will readily wend their way through the free State of Texas to Mexico, which, according to Mr. Walker, is the Eldorado of the colored population of North America. These outgivings of Mr. Walker must have been intended more for the latitude of New England, New York, New Jersey, &c., than for that of Kentucky. The notion that when Texas becomes a part of the Union and is erected into some half a dozen slave states, the ten or twenty millions of slaves which will then be held south of the Potomac, will by their masters, be permitted to escape and enconce themselves in Mexico, is too visionary, not to say too ridiculous, to merit serious animadversion; and I turn with pleasure from these disgusting, because palpably false and fraudulent representations, to the true reasons for annexing Texas to the United States, as frankly avowed by Gen. Lamar, late president of Texas, and by yourself and those persons acting under your instructions. This open avowal by you of the real motives for the measure, was what I anticipated, and what the American public expected from the known candor and high and honorable bearing so long witnessed and so universally and deservedly admired in JOHN C. CALHOUN.

Gen. Lamar, late President of Texas, in his letter addressed to a meeting of the citizens of Macon, in Georgia, in the

month of August last, urges the annexation of Texas almost solely on the ground that it will secure and perpetuate the institution of slavery in the southern States of the Union. The object of his reasoning is to establish among others the following propositions:—

1. That without annexation, slavery will be abolished in Texas, not by its becoming a British colony, but by the voluntary desire of the people, expressed through the polls of the election.

2. If Texas abolishes slavery the institution cannot exist for more than half a century in the United States.

3. Annexation will secure and perpetuate slavery both in Texas and the United States, and for *that reason* he urges annexation.

In proof of the first proposition, I quote the following paragraph from page 10 of the address of Gen. Lamar:—

“For the last few years, the want of peace with Mexico, and the consequent idea of insecurity to negro property, has arrested emigration almost entirely from the southern portion of the United States, whilst the influx of emigrants from Europe has been continuous and great, and is still increasing; so that if this state of things continue without interruption for any length of time, the anti-slavery party in Texas will acquire the ascendancy, and may not only abolish slavery by a constitutional vote, but may change the whole character of the constitution itself.

At present the anti-slavery party is in the minority, but it would be dangerous even now to agitate the question with much violence; for the majority of the people of Texas are not the owners of slaves; and I do not see why all such might not be lured into an acquiescence of a gradual emancipation for the sake of independence.”

Again, in page 11, Gen. Lamar says, “abolition in Texas would be unaccompanied with danger.” He says in page 15, that “Texas if left to stand a lone, there is every probability that slavery will be abandoned in that country,****.” “The negroes in that country are yet but few in number, and would be emancipated in the country without the slightest inconvenience, and indeed would continue to be useful in the capacity of hirelings; but at page 14 he says, that in the Southern States, on the contrary, their hopes of safety and prosperity are founded on the institution of slavery.”

In support of the second proposition, Gen. Lamar says in his address (page 15,) “that a half a century will not roll away before the slaves will so accumulate and the lands so

decline in fertility, that this species of property will not only cease to be profitable, but will become a burden to its owners."

With respect to the influence of annexation on the preservation of slavery in the United States, the General says, (page 17,) "I doubt not it will be readily admitted by every candid mind, that the annexation of Texas to the American Union would contribute greatly to the wealth and glory of the country at large, and that in relation to the southern States in particular, it would not only increase their importance, but it would give *stability* and safety to their domestic institutions, and *thereby save them FOREVER from the unparalleled calamities of abolition.*" In page 43, he says, "being however fully satisfied that without the advantages of slavery, Texas can never be a nation of any great importance or prosperity, and believing that her union with the United States will give *permanency* to that institution in both countries, I have discussed the subject mainly upon this principle."

Can any man fail to perceive that the grounds on which Gen. Lamar advocates annexation are directly adverse to the grounds on which Messrs. Walker, Pratt & Co. support it? And after what has been said, can any one doubt that the former is arguing in good faith, and that the latter are presenting views not their own, but made "TO ORDER," to hoodwink and delude the good people north of Mason and Dixon's line? I hope their good sense will save them from such miserable attempts at fraud and deception.

The views expressed by yourself, sir, in your official communication to Mr. Packenham, on the 18th day of last April, seem to me in accordance with those of general Lamar. With characteristic fairness and candor you make no pretensions that the treaty of annexation had been negotiated to prevent Texas from becoming an English colony, but on the contrary you openly and distinctly avow that the object was to prevent the abolition of slavery by the Texan government, with a view more effectually to secure the safety and permanence of the institution of slavery in the slave holding states of the Union; and in this avowal you are fully supported by your predecessor, Mr. Upshur, in his correspondence with the diplomatic agents of the United States.

I cannot persuade myself that a single word more need be said in reply to the arguments urged to the people of the northern and middle states in favor of annexation, and I therefore proceed to state the reasons why, in my judgment, Texas ought *not* to be annexed to the United States; and as I have, I fear, detained the reader so long in answering

the arguments in favor of annexation as to exhaust his patience, I hope to make him some amends by stating with great brevity my objections to the measure.

In the performance of this undertaking I shall not notice the objection arising from the assumption by this government of the debt now due from Texas, but I shall leave those who in common with myself believe it unconstitutional and inexpedient for this nation to assume the debts of any of the states of this Union, to make and urge that objection ; nor shall I remark on the delusive hope held out that the repayment of the debt of Texas will ultimately be effected by the avails of the sales of the public lands held by that government—lands, the greater part of which, if not all, that are suitable for cultivation, have been heretofore granted to individuals and companies, first by Spain, afterwards by Mexico, and lastly by the Texan government, as has been ably shewn by Mr. Benton, of the senate, in his masterly and statesmanlike speech on that subject ; nor shall I repeat the objections contained in the letter of Mr. Clay, addressed from North Carolina to the editors of the *National Intelligencer*, and the letter of Mr. Van Buren to Mr. Hammet, dated on the 20th day of last April. These letters, and especially that of Mr. Van Buren, prove that Texas, having originally been a part of the republic of Mexico, and that government still claiming jurisdiction over it, cannot be seized by the United States while we are at peace with the Mexican republic, and treaty obligations exist between us, without involving so palpable a violation of the laws of nations as will merit exclusion from the pale of the civilized and christian nations of the world. I could add nothing, were I to attempt it, to the able and impressive views which have been presented by the distinguished gentlemen to whom I have alluded, as well as by many others. These objections, however, are in their nature temporary, and capable of being removed by a change of circumstances. I contend, and I hope to be able to prove, that Texas, neither at the present or any future period, can become a part of the United States without an alteration of our constitution ; and that even then she ought not to be admitted without a restriction against slave holding and slave representation. If tomorrow Mexico were to acknowledge the independence of Texas, and if Texas were entirely free from debt, my objections to annexation would not be obviated or materially affected. These objections are—

I. Annexation is unconstitutional.

The power to annex another NATION to the United States, and in this way make one nation by the amalgamation of two, is claimed by virtue of the first clause of the third section of the fourth article of the constitution of the United States. It is in the words following :—

“ New states may be admitted by the congress into this Union ; but no new state shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state, nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states or parts of states without the consent of the legislature of the states concerned, as well as of Congress.” The very next clause, and which indeed is a part of the same third section, provides that “ Congress shall have power to dispose of and to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territories or other property belonging to the United States.”

Before I proceed to the examination of the merits of the question arising under this section, it may be well to remark, that the advocates of annexation claim that this question has been decided by the admission of Louisiana and the Floridas into the Union. To this I reply, that the cases are not parallel ; that in both these cases it was a mere question of the extension of boundaries by the consent of the respective nations who owned these territories. Louisiana included the mouth of the Mississippi and the city of New Orleans, which was and is the great place of deposit and the only outlet for the immense productions of that part of the United States west of the Allegany mountains. A proposition was made to extend the boundaries of the United States so as to include the Mississippi, and thereby secure forever the free navigation of it, and upon an offer made by France to cede the whole of Louisiana to us, it was accepted. This, together with the cession of Florida, which was made under circumstances I need not detail, but which are fresh in the recollection of all, presented a very different case from that of a negociation with an independent nation for the purpose of a union, and finally of forming an entire nation and the United States into one nation. I am aware that when the advocates of annexation are pressed on this subject, they say, that Texas is a part of Mexico, that its inhabitants were oppressed by their own government, and now appeal to us for protection, but when met with the answer that it is not competent for the United States, after having solemnly acknowledged Texas to be an independent nation—after having formed treaties with her as such, and sent and received from her diplomatic agents, to deny that she is an

independent nation : and that, on the other hand, if Texas is a part of Mexico, we have no better right to make a treaty of annexation with its inhabitants than had Mr. Van Buren in 1837, to make a treaty for the annexation of Canada with the Canadian patriots ; these advocates again shift their ground, and declare Texas to be an independent nation. The question, then, is not as in the case of Louisiana and Florida, whether the United States, by the consent of the power owning the territory adjoining them, have a right to extend their boundaries, but whether the treaty making power, or congress, have a right to annihilate this nation by incorporating it with another, or, which is the same thing, by incorporating another nation with this. But I deny that congress possessed the constitutional power of purchasing Louisiana and erecting it into one of the states of this republic. True, the act has been done, and has been so long acquiesced in, that the arrangement cannot and ought not after forty years acquiescence to be disturbed. But I protest against citing one breach of the constitution to justify another. If this were tolerated, the whole constitution might be destroyed by legislative and judicial decisions. It is now an indisputable historical fact, that Mr. Jefferson, under whose directions the treaty for the purchase of Louisiana was negotiated, after it was signed, expressed an opinion that that territory could not become a part of the United States without an amendment to the constitution granting to congress that specific power. In his letter to Mr. Breckenridge, dated August 12th, 1803, speaking of the treaty for the purchase of Louisiana, he uses this unequivocal language :—" The constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory—*still less for incorporating foreign nations into our Union !*" But such were the advantages and necessity of the purchase, and so universal was the approbation of the measure, that a majority of congress thought it unnecessary to incur the delay which would have been necessary in order to procure an amendment of the constitution ; and Mr. Jefferson finally yielded—and this act, done under such circumstances, is now cited as an evidence of constitutional law, and claimed as a binding precedent in all coming time. Surely the democratic party in this nation will not contend that a precedent can add any power to congress not granted in the constitution. A charter for a United States Bank has several times been granted by congress, sometimes when federal and sometimes when democratic majorities controlled that body, and at one time as a

federal and another as a democratic measure ; it has been approved by several presidents belonging to adverse political parties ; it has been sanctioned by the supreme court of the United States, and a United States Bank under those laws has existed among us for more than forty years, and yet it is now the settled doctrine of the democratic party that the granting of such charter was unconstitutional. The renewal of the charter of the last bank was defeated, and if a new company should at this moment apply for a charter, it would also be denied, principally on the ground of its unconstitutionality, all the precedents I have cited to the contrary notwithstanding.

The question in the present case is, has the treaty making power, or has congress, the right to annex another nation to this, or this nation to another, under the third section of the fourth article? A moment's reflection will satisfy the most common mind, that whether the nation to be annexed contains eighty thousand or eighty millions of inhabitants, or whether such nation happens to be contiguous, or is situated in Europe, or in Asia, can have no bearing on this great question of constitutional law.

The convention of 1789, formed the instrument which we call a constitution for the then thirteen independent States and the north western territory, being the same tract of country designated in the treaty with Great Britain concluded in 1783. The members of that convention foresaw that some of the States, when their whole territory should be occupied by civilized inhabitants, would be larger than convenience would require ; and there was an extensive territory west of the mountain, then a wilderness, which they anticipated would soon be inhabited by citizens of the United States. This territory had been ceded by Virginia, New York, and other States, to the confederacy, and was, therefore, held in common by all the States of the Union, and was of course not then divided and erected into states. As the instrument, the convention were then forming contained a provision that all powers not expressly granted to the new government were in terms reserved to the States or to the people, it became necessary to vest congress with the power, when a state should become inconveniently large, to erect it into two or more States ; and when the territory owned by the confederacy should be occupied, to erect that into so many States as congress should deem proper. For these purposes, and it seems evident to me for none other, they declared that "new States may be admitted by congress

into the Union ;” but, in order clearly to show that their attention was confined to the territory then held by the Union, they as it were in the same breath say, that no State shall be divided or dismembered without its consent ; and in the same section they confer on congress the power of making regulations respecting the territories. What plain common sense man can read this section and suspect, or even imagine, that its authors dreamed of conferring on congress the power of annexing this nation to another? And yet Mr. Van Buren, in his letter to Mr. Hammet, infers, because Mr. Edmund Randolph proposed the resolution that provision ought to be made for the admission of States lawfully arising *within the limits of the United States*, and because when the subject of that resolution was acted upon by the convention the words used in the third section happened to be preferred to the words contained in Mr. Randolph’s resolution, that the convention *intended* to vest congress with the power of admitting any and all foreign States into this Union—aye, that a bare majority in congress should have the power to “*re-annex*” the United States to Great Britain, and thus furnish us with the comfortable prospect of electing for a president of the new moddled United States, a legitimate descendant of the royal George. I am aware that this is supposing an extreme case, but I submit that Mr. Van Buren’s construction of the third section might by possibility lead to the result I have imagined. Mr. Van Buren does not inform us of the reasons why the words in the section were substituted for the words contained in Mr. Randolph’s resolution ; but in the absence of such information I will venture to predict, that if the debates on that clause could be furnished us, it would be rendered evident that the convention adopted the section as it is, because they considered that its words expressed Mr. Randolph’s intention with greater brevity, and equally as clear as those used in his resolution.

Mr. Van Buren infers that the convention intended to vest congress with the power of incorporating foreign states with the Union, because the articles of confederation contained a clause, “That Canada, *acceding to the confederation*, shall be admitted into, and entitled to all the advantages of this Union.” This he cites as “one link in the chain of evidence” of the real intention of the convention of 1789.—Surely Mr. Van Buren was aware that the articles of confederation were formed in July, 1778, in the midst of the revolutionary war—that before and sometime after the com-

mencement of that war, it was expected that Canada would join the United States in the contest for independence, and that negotiations were for a long time carried on to effect that desirable object. It was, therefore, wise and politic, when the articles of confederation were devised and adopted, to leave a door open for the entrance of Canada into the Union, provided she would "join in the measures of the United States" by becoming a party to the war then waged against Great Britain. One cannot avoid being astonished that so eminent a lawyer and statesman as Mr. Van Buren undoubtedly is, should, on a great question of constitutional law, urge a clause framed *at the time and for the purpose* for which this clause was framed and adopted, "as a link in the chain" of evidence of the intention of a convention which met seven or eight years after Great Britain had acknowledged our independence, and when the circumstances of all the parties had materially changed.

Mr. Van Buren seems aware that the power, which he contends is vested in congress, is a dangerous power, and that propositions of annexation under it might be made "of a character so unwise and improvident as to strike the minds of all with repugnance;" but he intimates that the responsibility of the representative to his constituents will afford a sufficient guarantee against any very flagrant abuse in the exercise of it. If the responsibility of which Mr. Van Buren speaks is sufficient to restrain improvident and unjust legislation, no constitution can in any case be necessary. On the contrary, a constitution would be an embarrassing and worse than useless clog on the legislator. The only use of a constitution is to render void unwise and corrupt legislation. All the fine spun and ingenious reasoning of Mr. Van Buren seems to me most effectually overturned, and every "link" in his "chain" dissevered by the following brief sentence written by THOMAS JEFFERSON, and contained in one of his letters to Wilson Cary Nicholas.

"When I consider," says that truly great man, "that the limits of the United States are precisely fixed by the treaty of 1783, that the constitution expressly declares itself to be made for the United States, I cannot help believing *the intention was not to permit congress to admit into the Union new States which should not be formed out of the territory for which and under whose authority alone they were then acting.*"

It cannot be denied, that if congress have the power to annex the nation of Texas to the United States, they have

also the power, by a bare majority of one in each House, to annex the Empire of Germany, or the kingdom of France, or that of Great Britain, or all of them, to the United States. Let me ask, in all soberness, who will contend that such a power constitutionally exists? If it does not, then the man who votes for the annexation of Texas violates his oath to God and his country.

II. I am opposed to the annexation of Texas, because it will extend slavery beyond our present borders, will increase to an incalculable amount the number of human beings who will be the victims of that institution, and will perpetuate it in the United States. That such will be the effect of this measure, I think I have already proved; but if I have not, your own views, publicly expressed, and those of General Lamar, late President of Texas, seem to me decisive on the subject. But while I honor the candor and frankness which induced the open and unreserved declaration of your sentiments contained in your letter to Mr. Packenham, I cannot but regret that you should in part have founded your argument in favor of slavery upon a vague and uncertain, not to say a false basis—I mean the returns of the officers who took the census of 1840.

In proof of the position that the colored race, when emancipated, degenerate, you assert, that from those returns a much larger proportion of free colored people are mutes, idiots, or insane, than are to be found among the same race who are slaves. It may be true that the proportion of mutes, insane persons, &c., is greater among the free blacks than among the slaves; but it is by no means true, to the extent represented by the returning officers of the census. Upon a careful examination of those returns, it will be found that the most palpable and gross (though I hope not intentional) errors have been committed; and what is quite singular is, that these errors are in a great degree confined to the accounts given of the colored population of the non-slaveholding states. In eleven towns in the state of Maine, the whole number of colored people is stated at seven, and yet in these same towns are returned *five* blind and *six* deaf and dumb colored persons. In nine towns in the state of Indiana, the whole colored population is stated at nine, while the mutes and blind are stated at NINETEEN!, &c. &c. [See document No. 580, report to the H. R. June 17, 1844.] I pray you not to believe that I intend to insinuate that you, sir, had any reason to suspect that the data on which you based your reasoning were incorrect. Far from it. I know

you are incapable of assuming false or even suspicious data, but I merely state the fact that you have reasoned from a supposed state of facts which you believed existed, but which in truth did not.

I still more regret, that in another capacity and on a different theatre, you have countenanced and supported the assertion, boldly made by Gen. Lamar, that "the system of servitude, as it exists in the southern states and in Texas, is the best relation which has been established between the *laboring* and *governing* portion of mankind." I have always been taught, and still believe, that labor,—manual labor, is honorable; that we owe a deep obligation to the producing class of community, of whom the hired laborer constitutes a part; and I assure you, sir, that instead of degrading that portion of our citizens, it has been the constant effort of the benevolent and patriotic among us to elevate them by affording the greatest possible facilities and encouragement for the improvement by a good education of the minds and morals of the whole mass of the rising generation; and I cannot but think, that, were you among us, you yourself, from the generous and benevolent emotions of your own heart, would be one of the most zealous and efficient in the good work. The manual laborers in the State of New York probably constitute more than nine-tenths of the electors, who, by their votes, dispose either directly or indirectly of all the public offices; so that instead of being, as Gen. Lamar seems to suppose, the "governed," *they* are in fact the "governing" portion of our community.

I am compelled to add, that I regret most especially that you, sir, in the middle of the nineteenth century, speaking in the name and as the organ of the people of the United States, should declare to the world that a species of slavery known to be more degrading and brutalizing than the slavery tolerated by either Greece or Rome, or the villainage which existed in Europe during the darkest period of the iron despotism of the feudal system, was "in reality a political institution essential to the *honor, safety* and *prosperity* of those states of the Union in which it exists." Believing, as I do, that slavery whenever and wherever it exists is an un-mixed evil, and a flagrant violation of the rights of humanity, as one of the citizens of this country, though an humble one, I solemnly protest against the sentiment, and I affirm that it is in direct opposition to the principles and views of a large majority of the people of these United States.

It being proved by the official communications of Mr.

Upshur, and admitted by yourself, that the great, and as I understand the correspondence, the only object which induced the treaty of annexation, was to prevent the emancipation of the slaves in Texas, and thereby ensure the safety and perpetuity of the institution of slavery in the United States, the only question which remains to be considered is, Is slavery a moral and political evil?

But I will not attempt to discuss this question. If the solemn asseveration of the authors of the declaration of independence be true, that "ALL MEN are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain *inalienable rights*, that among them are life, LIBERTY and the pursuit of happiness"—if the opinion of an immense majority of the civilized inhabitants of the globe is not founded in error, if the experience of all ages has demonstrated the demoralizing, corrupting and blighting effects of slavery in all societies in which it has been tolerated, if in fact it be self-evident to every mind not biassed by education or rendered impalpable to truth by self interest, that slavery is an unmixed evil, and that its toleration is a sin against nature and nature's God, then I am quite sure that nothing which I can say, will convince you or the public that the question whether slavery is an evil ought to be answered in the affirmative.

If, then, slavery be a political and moral evil of the greatest magnitude, if annexation tends directly to increase and perpetuate that evil, and if the most intelligent friends of annexation support that measure, for the sole reason that it will increase and perpetuate slavery in Texas and the United States—is the congress of this Union, and especially are its members who have been chosen from the free states, prepared to support it? that is to say, are they prepared to support by their votes a measure whose principal if not sole object is to increase and perpetuate slavery? This question they must answer to their constituents and to their own consciences.

III. When, in 1789, the constitution was formed and ratified, the non slave holding states, in consideration that the slave holding states would consent to be taxed in proportion to their representation in the national legislature, agreed that the latter description of states should be entitled to a representation on account of their slaves, in the proportion of five slave to three free inhabitants. In pursuance of this compact, South Carolina, at a ratio of 70,680 free inhabitants for one representative, with, according to the last census a free population of 267,361, and a slave population of

327,038, sends to the house of representatives seven members, whereas, with a population of 2,428,921 free inhabitants, New York is represented by thirty four members only. Hence it is apparent, that while 71,438 inhabitants of New York are entitled to one member only, in South Carolina 38,194 inhabitants elect a member. It is also apparent that South Carolina holds the same advantage over New York in the creation of the national executive. It is true, that in the last apportionment South Carolina, being entitled to six members, had so large a fraction over, as, according to the rule adopted by congress, gave her a seventh member, and New York, although she had a fraction over, yet, that fraction being smaller than that of South Carolina, the same rule reduced her to thirty four members; but it is nevertheless evident, that under the compact of 1789, one citizen in South Carolina possesses nearly as much political power as two citizens of the state of New York. I have before stated, that the consideration for which New York and the other free states yielded to South Carolina and the other southern states a slave representation, was, that the latter states were to be taxed, in any system of direct taxation which might be adopted, in proportion to their representation.

I now remark, that at the time the constitution was adopted, it was probably expected that the government would be mainly supported by direct taxation. The immense influx of money which has since flowed into the treasury from import duties was not then anticipated. The expectation to which I have alluded has not heretofore been realized. The public debt has been paid, and the expenditures of the government have been defrayed without a resort to direct taxation, except at two very short intervals, and nothing is more certain than that direct taxation will never hereafter be resorted to as a permanent means of supporting the government. Hence the consideration for a slave representation never has been and never will be paid by the slave holding states. But this provision is not the less binding on us at the north on that account. We have entered into the covenant, and we must keep it. We ought not to disturb our southern brethren, and we will not disturb them, in the enjoyment of what they denominate their property. If one citizen of South Carolina, or any other of the slave states, shall in pursuance of this national covenant at some future day possess as much political power as three or four, instead as at present of two citizens of the state of New York, I have sworn to support the citizens of the slave holding states in the en-

joyment and exercise of that power, and I will do so. I will perform the condition of the bond, though the pound of flesh nearest the heart is demanded. But the proposition to admit Texas, with the right of slave holding and *slave representation*, is an offer to enter into a NEW COMPACT; and it being a new and original compact, surely each party has a right to consider and decide on the terms of the offer. If the reports of Gen. Lamar and other intelligent men are correct, and I do not doubt their correctness, Texas is a country, possessing a rich soil, peculiarly adapted to the abundant production of cotton and sugar, and a climate in all respects suited to a negro population. This being the case, it is evident that in no country in America can slave labor be employed to greater advantage than Texas. Hence I infer, that when Texas shall become a well settled country, the proportion of slaves, if slavery shall be tolerated, to the free inhabitants will be as great if not greater than it now is in any of the slave states; and I think the calculation a very safe one, that there will in a very short time be found in that country, at least five slaves to three free inhabitants. The proportion of slaves in the West Indies, we all know, very far exceeded five of the former to three of the latter. I lay out of view the suggestion of Mr. Benton, in one of his able speeches in the the senate, that from the small portion of Texas he proposes to annex, three slave and three free states may be created; for in that case, according to the view I am taking, the principle would be the same, and equally objectionable even if five free states are to be erected, and but one slave state. Taking it then for granted, that when Texas becomes settled there will be five slaves to three freemen, the present offer of Texas amounts simply to this. "If you New Yorkers," say the Texans, "will pay our debts, defend us against our enemies, (as you have done in the case of Florida) and will allow one citizen in Texas to possess and exercise as much political power as two citizens of the state of New York, we will consent to become partners and unite with you!" Without one word more of comment, I ask, what representative from New York, or any other free state, will vote to accept such an offer, and after thus bartering away the political power of his constituents, dare to look them in the face? But before closing I will add, that the principle of property representation is in direct collision with the genius and spirit of all the northern state governments, and utterly repugnant to our feelings. So much higher do we value the rights of persons than of property,

that the vote of John Jacob Astor is balanced by the vote of the pauper in the alms house ; and yet the offer now gravely made, is to admit Texas on the condition that in consequence of a species of property held by its citizens, the vote of one Texan gambler or freebooter shall be equal to the vote of John Jacob Astor and the Patroon of Albany.

Let not our southern brethren be deceived. True it is, the northern land speculator may, if he can realize his thousand per cent profit on his fictitious claims for land in Texas, disregard the rights of his fellow citizens and the rights of man, the holder of Texas scrip, prompted by the expectation that by the wand of that mighty Midas to be forced into existence by a union of legislative and diplomatic power, his stock which cost him \$10,000, will be instantaneously transformed into 100,000, the humble and hungry seeker for the crumbs of national patronage may hawk about our streets the "lone star" and an Ingersol, a Bancroft, or a Buchanan, dazzled with the prospect of a seat in the cabinet, or a foreign embassy with all its paraphernalia, may in conjunction with speculators induce popular orators and printers to connect Polk and Dallas, Texas and *Liberty* together, and invoke the huzzas of the multitude upon the uttering of that singular combination of sounds ; yet there is, notwithstanding, a deep tone of feeling fixed in the breasts of a vast majority of the people north of Mason and Dixon's line, which will not be suppressed, and cannot be eradicated, against this unconstitutional, unjust, and unholy alliance.

HAMDEN.

Otsego County, Nov. 25, 1844.

THE preceding letter was in type before I had seen Gov. Hammond's message to the legislature of South Carolina, and before I had read the last message of the president of the United States ; but the address of the governor merely affords confirmatory evidence of the position taken by me in the preceding pages, that the honest advocates of annexation are desirous to effect that measure solely for the reason that it will secure and perpetuate slavery in the southern states ; and the message of the president* does not, in my

* I have not seen the documents which accompanied the message.

judgment, present any arguments in favor of the project not noticed, and, as I humbly conceive, answered in the foregoing sheets, except the following assertion, if indeed such an assertion can be considered an argument. "The decision," says the president, "on this great and interesting subject, has been *decisively* manifested. The question of annexation has been presented *nakedly* to their consideration. * * * * * A controlling majority of the people, and a large majority of the states, have declared in favor of immediate annexation. INSTRUCTIONS have thus come up to both branches of the legislature from their respective constituents, in terms the most emphatic."

The only way in which a *state, as such*, can speak, is through its legislature; and I am quite sure that a majority of the state legislatures have not declared in favor of annexation, on the contrary, I think it probable, a majority of them are, at this moment, against the measure.

It is very questionable, after deducting the votes cast by the abolitionists in the nation, all of whom are most certainly opposed to annexation, whether a majority of the votes of the people have been given for Mr. Polk. At any rate, it is evident that if he has received a majority, that majority is very small. But in the State of New York, whose electoral vote made Mr. Polk president, *he* received 237,588 votes, Mr. Clay 232,473, and Mr. Birney 15,812; and it will be admitted on all hands, that every vote given for Mr. Birney was given by a person opposed to annexation. Now, conceding what seems to be assumed by the president, that every individual who voted for Mr. Polk was in favor, and, as would necessarily follow, that every person who voted for Mr. Clay was against, annexation, the aggregate vote for Clay and Birney being 248,285, and the number of votes for Polk being 237,588, the majority against annexation in New York is, 10697; and the State of New York having decided the election of president, upon what principle can it be claimed that the election of Mr. Polk is a decision in favor of annexation? I however insist, that, on a question of constitutional power in the executive or legislative department of the government, the votes of the people at the polls of the election cannot render that constitutional, which, without such vote, is unconstitutional. If in this I am not right, our constitution may be altered at every presidential election, and may finally be entirely '*nullified*.' But I peremptorily deny that all who voted for Mr. Polk intended by such vote to express their approbation of annexation. There are so many questions which always af-

fect the presidential election, that it seems to me no reasonable man will seriously contend that a small majority for one of the candidates is evidence of the opinion of a majority of the votes on any one particular question ; far less can it be regarded as "*instructions*" on any single question discussed during the canvass, to the two houses of the legislature. Local interests, views in relation to the personal fitness of the candidate, an infinite variety of measures, such as the tariff, the management of the fiscal concerns of the government, bank or no bank, &c., and perhaps more than all, attachment to the political party of which the voter and candidate are members, do have, and at the last election, independent of the Texas question, did have, a mighty and controlling effect on the mind of the voter. I repeat, what I have heretofore stated, that I verily believe Mr. Polk received hundreds of thousands of votes from persons opposed to annexation.

But for the purpose of putting this matter at rest, I submit the following question. Had the author and negotiator of the Texan treaty, Mr. Tyler himself, continued to be, as at one time he was, a candidate in opposition to Mr. Clay, is there a man of common sense in this community who will not admit that Mr. T. would have been beaten by an immense majority ? I put this question without intending or feeling the slightest disrespect for Mr. Tyler ; for we all know that men of the greatest personal and political merit may, from accidental circumstances, at times be unpopular. I merely state the fact, that I do not believe there is an individual of either party, who holds a decent standing in society, who will not promptly express his belief that Mr. Tyler would not in such an event have received more than a third part of the votes of the people of the United States. But, in case such an event had happened, what, according to the president's doctrine, would have been the '*INSTRUCTIONS*' the people would have sent up to the "two branches of the legislature ?" Would the friends of annexation have considered *instructions* thus furnished binding upon them ? I trow not. The answer to this question decides the matter in controversy.

I am, however, compelled to acknowledge, that when I consider that Mr. Polk is no doubt extremely anxious that this question should be disposed of before he commences his administration, that the friends of annexation will have it in their power to create a sort of fancy stock of governmental patronage, by the promise of office to any and all persons who can be useful to them, to be conferred after the fourth

of March, and after the deed shall have been done, that as Mr. Tyler's future political prospects may, in his judgment, very much depend on the annexation of Texas, in pursuance of his recommendation, the whole patronage and power of the present administration will be put in requisition to carry the measure ; and more especially that there is and will be afloat, on Capitol Hill and in the market, an incalculable amount of TEXAS SCRIP—I am painfully apprehensive that before the fourth day of next March the novel and gigantic speculation of the purchase of a nation for ten millions of dollars, more or less, will be consummated, and the nation, which at present is comprised of twenty six United States, will cease to exist, and a new one will be formed composed of those states and the nation of Texas. In such an event the dreadful evils resulting from it may not immediately be felt. A few years may pass away in apparent quietness ; but those evils must and will ultimately come. The consequences of the measure will reach far beyond the lives of those who are now busy and active on the political stage. If I might be allowed to avail myself of the words of Horace Walpole, without being charged with presuming to compare myself with him, I would say that “ I desired not to pry into that book of futurity, could I finish my course in peace ; but one must take the chequered scenes of life as they come.—What signifies whether the elements are serene or turbulent when a private old man slips away ? What has he and the world's concerns to do with one another ? He may sigh for his country, and babble about it ; but he might as well sit quiet, and read or tell old stories ; the past is as important to him as the future.”

HAMDEN.

ERRATA.—After the word “Jackson,” in the second line from the bottom of page 8, insert “will in a future war land an invading army in Texas ?” In page 10, for “that data” read “these data.” In page 11, line 11 from the top, for “is,” read “in.”

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